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June 11, 1951

Mr. Nitze:

Subject: United States Policy Toward Spain

On June 6 you requested me to ascertain the status of our policy planning with respect to Spain. You expressed especial interest in a recent assertion that it is our purpose to bring about the overthrow of the Franco regime. The following is a preliminary report based on documents thusfar made available to me.

1. During the past year (beginning in June, 1950) the formulation of our policy toward Spain has advanced through a series of NSC papers--of which NSC 72/5, now awaiting approval, appears to be the latest. A copy of this document is attached hereto.

Policy action with respect to Spain is under way. It is based upon procedures recommended in NSC 72/4 (approved February 1, 1951). Conversations concerning Spain's role in the defense of Western Europe have taken place between Ambassador Griffis and General Franco, and between other American representatives and representatives of the British and French Governments and the North Atlantic Council of Deputies. These exchanges are discussed in the accompanying NSC 72/4 Progress Report dated June 5, 1951.

2. Policies evolving from the studies and actions cited appear to be preponderantly military and secondarily economic. Earlier policy toward

Spain

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Spain was based principally upon political considerations, related largely to the undemocratic practices of the Franco regime. The attitude of censure was reflected in various resolutions and determinations of the United Nations (e.g. Spain could not be a member as long as the Franco Government remained in power) and is described in detail in Secretary Acheson's letter of January 18, 1950, to Senator Connally, a copy of which is hereto attached.

As long ago as January 5, 1948, an informal instruction from WE to our Chargé d'Affaires in Madrid described the Department's "general thinking on the subject of policy toward Spain" in these terms:

"1. We want to bring about gradual normalization of relations between Spain and the United States and, incidentally, between Spain and the other western countries.

"2. While popular opinion in this country and Western Europe with respect to Spain has cooled off to a very considerable extent, complete normalization would be difficult, if not impossible, without some democratization in Spain.

"3. We emphatically would not want to see the Spanish state weakened to a point at which civil disorders might ensue.

"4. Changes in the form or composition of the Spanish Government are the business of Spaniards alone; we would make no suggestions more specific than the general position which this letter attempts to outline.

"5. International pressure to 'kick-Franco-out-now' has failed and has served only: (1) to strengthen his resistance to any liberalization under foreign pressure; (2) to increase support for him in Spain among those who would like a more democratic government but object to foreign pressure or fear renewed disorders; and (3) to give the communists everywhere one more chance to cause trouble and embarrassment.

"6. The

"6. The 'kick-Franco-out-now' policy is over as far as we are concerned, although we are unlikely to make this public [illegible]ess and until there is some evidence that Franco [illegible]s willing to start on his own an evolutionary process toward democracy...."

More recently, following modification of United Nations policy, we reestablished full Ambassadorial relations with Franco, and presumably are carrying on normal diplomatic relations with his government.

3. The files at present at my disposal do not explain the policy basis for the assertion regarding Franco's overthrow to which you alluded, and which is apparently substantiated by the reference in

(It was these cryptic references that led me to suggest to you in my memorandum of June 7 that we were not ready to avail ourselves

S/P should not, in my opinion, become involved in it.)

Mr. Jones (Counselor of Embassy, Madrid) will arrive in Washington in the near future. I shall endeavor to see both of them and to have them attend an S/P meeting if you are agreeable.

Enclosures:

1. Press Release 54, 1/19/50
2. Cy. 44, Progress Report on NSC 72/4, 6/5/51
3. Cy. 44, NSC 72/5

S/P:WThurston:vh